Wisconsin Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS)

Action Guide

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
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Wisconsin Dropout Early Warning System Action Guide

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Introduction

Dropping out of school has long been understood to be a process, rather than an event. Information on where students are in this process at any given time has too often been costly and time-consuming for school staff to collect and monitor. To help educators identify students in need of additional social, emotional, or academic supports early, in the middle grades, and prevent drop outs or unplanned late graduations, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction DPI has developed the Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS).

DEWS analyzes state data on prior Wisconsin student cohorts to identify characteristics of middle grade students who later dropped out or had an unplanned late graduation. It then compares *last year's* data on *current* students to those characteristics and calculates an **individual DEWS score, along with data in four domains: attendance, discipline, mobility and WKCE**. [1] The DEWS score ranges from 0 to 100, and represents the chance that a student will graduate within 4 years of entering high school. The higher the score, the greater the chance that the student will graduate after 4 years in high school. DEWS provides this information in the form of a student roster with key data elements, individual reports for each student, and a school-wide summary report.

Because the DEWS scores is a prediction, it will identify some students as at risk who will graduate on time and others as low risk who will fail to graduate on time. Thus, it is essential to use the DEWS scores in conjunction with other local and more current data. DEWS was designed to be part of a Response to Intervention (RtI) data-driven decision-making process.

This guide describes how to interpret and use DEWS information to inform local decisions about whether or not to intervene with individual students. This guide has five parts, how to access DEWS, the *three action steps to take in using DEWS (Interpret, Review, and Decide),* and how to provide feedback to DPI about DEWS.

Data Disclaimer:

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has made a reasonable effort to ensure that the accompanying information is up-to-date, accurate, complete, and comprehensive at the time of disclosure. These records reflect data as reported to this agency by the educational community we serve for the reporting period indicated. These records are a true and accurate representation of the data on file at the DPI. Authenticated information is accurate only as of the time of validation and verification. The DPI is not responsible for data that is misinterpreted or altered in any way. Derived conclusions and analyses generated from this data are not to be considered attributable to the DPI. Willful intent to alter and intentional tampering with public records is punishable under Wis. Stat. sec. 946.72. Offenses against computer data and programs are punishable under Wis. Stat. sec. 943.70 (2). All screenshots are from WISEdash Secure, but have been redacted to obscure the identity of any district, school, or student.

[1] Though the DEWS scores share key data elements with elements of the state accountability system, it is not included in the school or district accountability system. It was designed strictly to serve as a diagnostic aide to school staff.

Access DEWS in WISEdash

Get a WAMS ID

DEWS is available through the Wisconsin Information System for Education, or WISEdash. Users will need an ID and password to access DEWS in WISEdash Secure. The Wisconsin Access Management System (WAMS) is used to create a user ID and password for authentication. The email address on the WAMS account should be your district email address so DPI can validate your identity and communicate with you at the district.

Every section of the DEWS Guide contains a section listing Key Links and Where to Get Help. If you have problems with any step in the guide, see this section!

Secure Home and all secure tools utilize the WAMS system for a login ID and password management. You will need your WAMS ID to login to Secure Home. A WAMS ID does not guarantee automatic access to Secure Home or the applications and tools available through Secure Home. Authorizations to use secure applications and tools are set up by your District Security Administrator or District Application Administrator through the Application Security Manager (ASM) tool.

Key Links:

- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_securehomedetail#WAMS (WAMS Resources)
- https://on.wisconsin.gov/WAMS/home (WAMS Home)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/wams-guide.pdf (DPI's WAMS Guide)

Where to Get Help:

- http://helpdesk.dpi.wi.gov/user.html (DPI HelpDesk)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_securehomeinfo (DPI SecureHome Info)

Get WISEdash Access from Your Application Administrator

School districts set and maintain their own access policies for secure tools like WISEdash. To access WISEdash users need authorization from their local Application Administrator. DPI maintains a directory of Application Administrators for all DPI secure tools online for you to identify who the contact person is at your district. Follow the link in the Key Links section to look up your Application Administrator.

NOTE: If you do not have a District Security Administrator listed, contact your District Administrator to request one from DPI.

If you do not have an Application Administrator listed for the application you want access to, contact your District Security Administrator (DSA) to have an Application Administrator assigned for the application. Then your Application Administrator can assign you access to WISEdash.

Your district policy will help determine what Application Role is appropriate for your position. For the purposes of DEWS you must be either a Student Detail Analyst or an Economic Indicator Analyst in WISEdash to view DEWS scores and reports.

Key Links:

- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_securehomedetail#APPADMIN (Application Administrator Information)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_securehomeinfo#sthash.S0efrg1I.dpuf (Find Your Application Administrator)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/asm-roles.pdf (Learn about ASM Roles)

Where to Get Help:

- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/Getting Started-Access to WISEdash.pdf (WISEdash Access Guide)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/Getting Started-About WISEdash.pdf (WISEdash Summary)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/user-guide-11082012.pdf (WISEdash User Guide)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wisedash-district-faq (WISEdash FAQ)
- http://helpdesk.dpi.wi.gov/user.html (DPI HelpDesk)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_securehomeinfo (DPI SecureHome Info)

Login to WISEdash

Access to all secure tools offered by DPI is available through Secure Home. Visit http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_dashhome and click on Secure Home. You will see the screen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: SecureHome Login Screen

Key Links:

- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_dashhome (Link to SecureHome)

Where to Get Help:

- http://helpdesk.dpi.wi.gov/user.html (DPI HelpDesk)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_securehomeinfo (DPI SecureHome Info)

Locate DEWS

After signing in, you are just a few short clicks away from accessing the DEWS scores for students in your school! The next screen you see is the WISEdash Welcome Page in Figure 2. Click on "WISEdash" at the top to enter WISEdash.

Figure 2: Welcome to WISEdash

The next screen you see will ask you to select your district and your school.[2] The other filters are optional, but can be used to select student groups of interest to you. For now, select a district and a school and click "Go" in the top right corner.

After making a selection in WISEdash you generally need to click the arrow next to "Go" in the top right to refresh the data

Figure 3: Select Your District and School

The next screen is the initial summary dashboard shown in Figure 4. This summary presents a subset of data for the students you selected in the previous step. Across the top you see various topics with unique dashboards. DEWS can be accessed from within any of the Enrollment, Attendance, or WSAS (Wisconsin Student Assessment System) dashboards.

[2] For most users the only district to select will be your home district for which you have authorized access. Some users may have been authorized to access more than one district, and then will need to choose a district before proceeding.

Figure 4: Initial Dashboard

Any of these additional dashboards can be found by clicking across the top of the navigation bar. Let's look at the example of the Enrollment dashboard, shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: WISEdash Enrollment Dashboard

DEWS reports are available for all students in grades 7-9. To specify which grade level is of interest simply click on the bar for grades 7, 8, or 9 in the first metric—Enrollment by Grade Level (Current). This action will bring up a new window with a list of all students currently enrolled in the selected grade along with their DEWS scores. This window is shown in Figure 6.

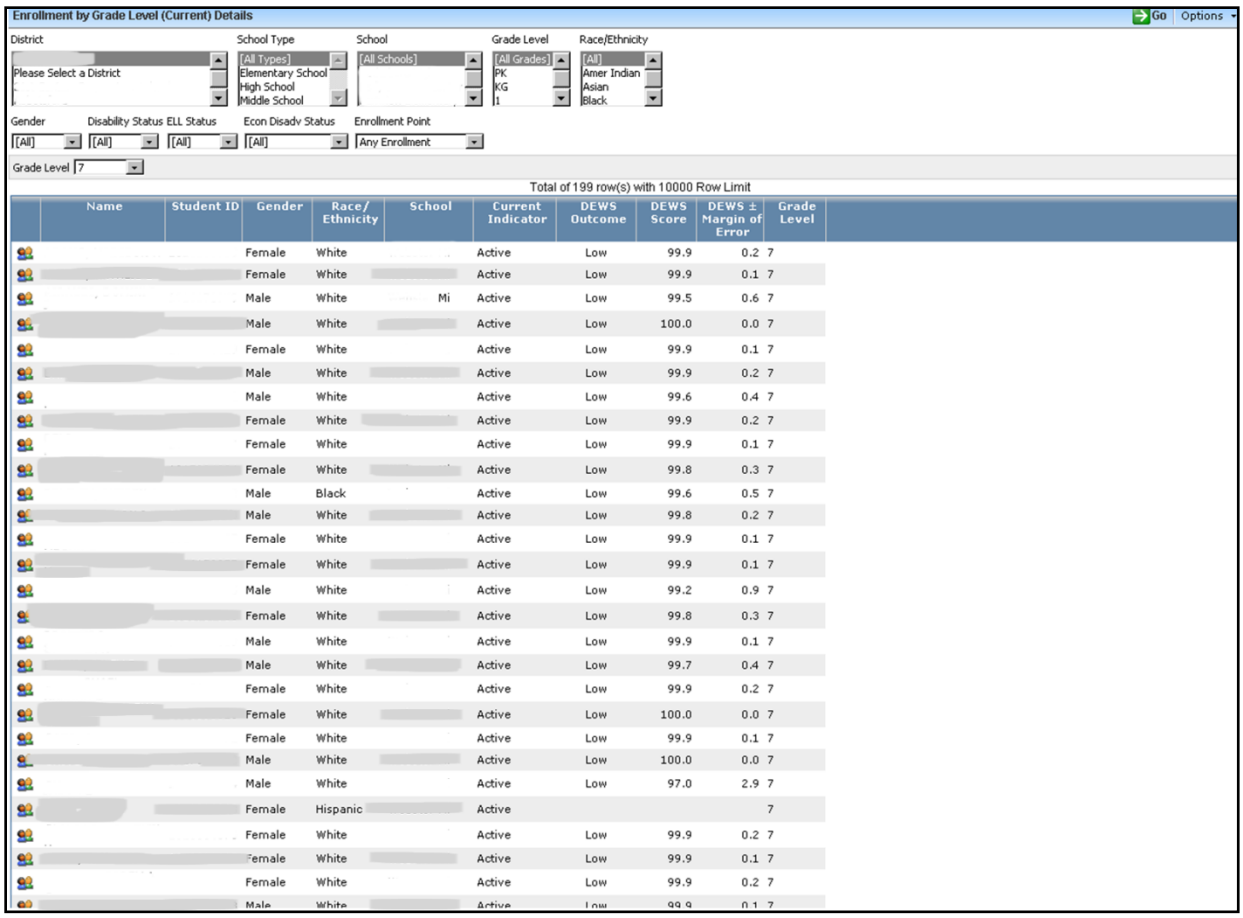


Figure 6: Student Roster

A key feature of the student roster is that the user can quickly sort students by the DEWS score. Clicking on the DEWS Score column will sort scores in an ascending or descending order. The sorted roster is shown in Figure 7.

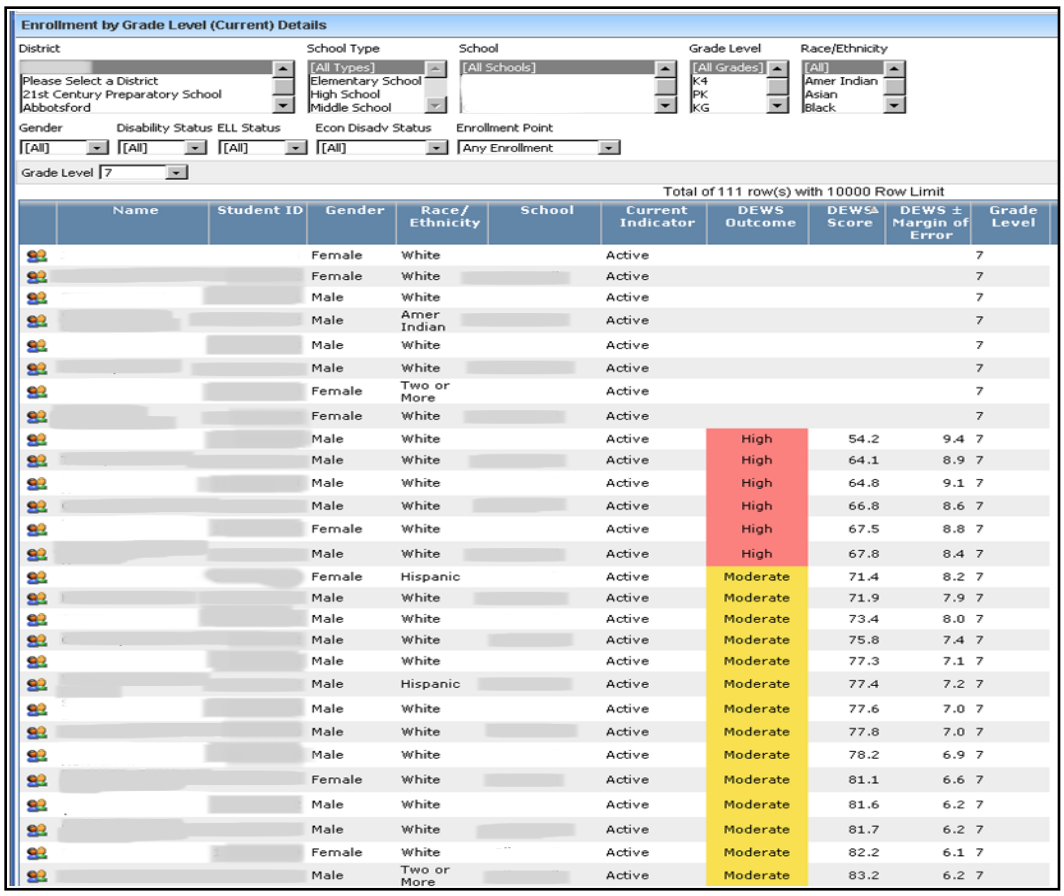


Figure 7: Sorted Student Roster

Figure 7 shows a sorted student roster. Students who are at high or moderate risk stand out. They have been highlighted in red or yellow to make them easy to identify.

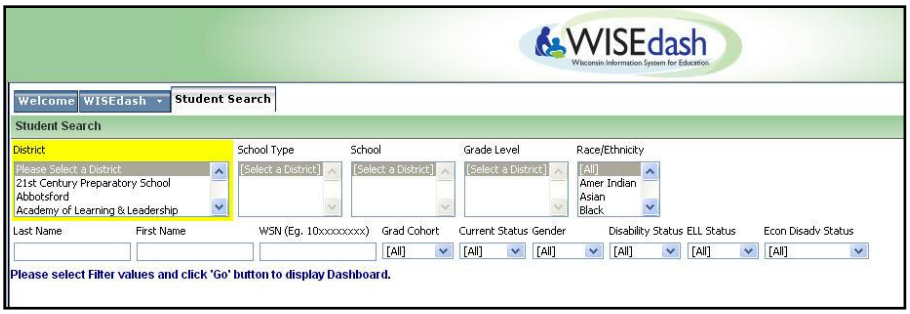


Figure 8: Student Search

Alternatively, by viewing any of the Enrollment, Attendance, or WSAS main dashboards, the user can display a student roster that includes the DEWS scores and can be exported to Excel or PDF. Student Search is useful when returning to review the information available in WISEdash for a student.

Key Links:

- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_dashhome (WISEdash Homepage)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/Getting Started-Access to WISEdash.pdf (WISEdash Access Guide)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/Getting Started-About WISEdash.pdf (WISEdash Summary)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/pdf/user-guide-11082012.pdf (WISEdash User Guide)

Where to Get Help:

- http://helpdesk.dpi.wi.gov/user.html (DPI HelpDesk)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wisedash-district-faq (WISEdash FAQ)

Export to Excel or PDF

Some users may be more comfortable exporting the DEWS data to Excel. This data export is easily done from within WISEdash. Simply select Options → Export Detail → To Excel or To PDF

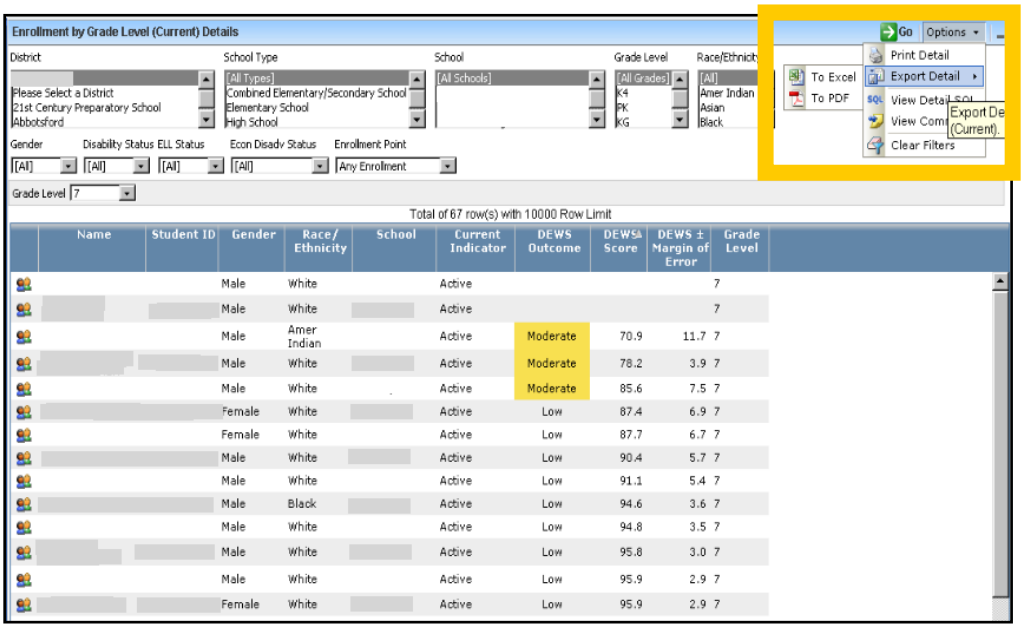
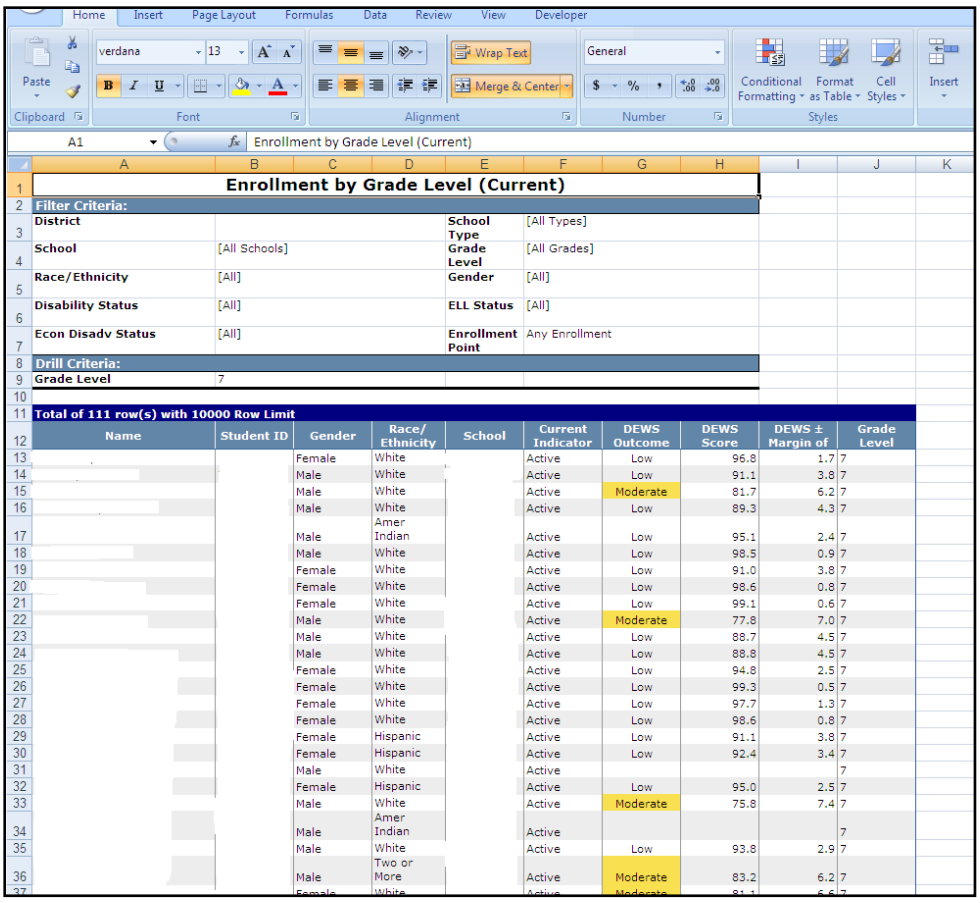


Figure 9: Selecting the Export Option



Enrollment by Grade Level (Current)

Filter Criteria:	
District	School Type: [All Types]
School: [All Schools]	Grade Level: [All Grades]
Race/Ethnicity: [All]	Gender: [All]
Disability Status: [All]	ELL Status: [All]
Econ Disadv Status: [All]	Enrollment Point: Any Enrollment
Drill Criteria:	
Grade Level: 7	

Total of 111 row(s) with 10000 Row Limit

Name	Student ID	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	School	Current Indicator	DEWS Outcome	DEWS Score	DEWS ± Margin of	Grade Level
		Female	White		Active	Low	96.8	1.7	7
		Male	White		Active	Low	91.1	3.8	7
		Male	White		Active	Moderate	81.7	6.2	7
		Male	White		Active	Low	89.3	4.3	7
		Male	Amer Indian		Active	Low	95.1	2.4	7
		Male	White		Active	Low	98.5	0.9	7
		Female	White		Active	Low	91.0	3.8	7
		Female	White		Active	Low	98.6	0.8	7
		Female	White		Active	Low	99.1	0.6	7
		Male	White		Active	Moderate	77.8	7.0	7
		Male	White		Active	Low	88.7	4.5	7
		Male	White		Active	Low	88.8	4.5	7
		Female	White		Active	Low	94.8	2.5	7
		Female	White		Active	Low	99.3	0.5	7
		Female	White		Active	Low	97.7	1.3	7
		Female	White		Active	Low	98.6	0.8	7
		Female	Hispanic		Active	Low	91.1	3.8	7
		Female	Hispanic		Active	Low	92.4	3.4	7
		Male	White		Active				7
		Female	Hispanic		Active	Low	95.0	2.5	7
		Male	White		Active	Moderate	75.8	7.4	7
		Male	Amer Indian		Active				7
		Male	White		Active	Low	93.8	2.9	7
		Male	Two or More		Active	Moderate	83.2	6.2	7

Figure 10: Excel Exported Report

The Excel file will download and you can open it in the program. It is formatted as seen above. The header of the sheet shows the filters that were active when you the data was exported.

Key Concepts:

- DEWS reports are available for nearly all students in grades 7-9 at the start of the school year. Beginning in the spring of 2014, reports will be available for students in grade 6.
- WISEdash Secure is the reporting environment where DEWS reports can be accessed. DEWS reports can be exported to Excel or PDF.
- Local districts control the access to WISEdash within their schools. Contact your Application Administrator to get access to the DEWS or to approve access for others.
- Details on the DEWS score are found in the next section.

Interpret the DEWS Reports

Users of DEWS in WISEdash must know how to interpret the information provided by DEWS. Accurate interpretation allows schools to provide the appropriate support or intervention to each student. .

What is a DEWS Score?

The DEWS score is the key indicator of the DEWS system. This score represents the estimated risk of dropping out or late graduation for an individual student.[3] It ranges from 0-100, representing the percentage of prior students with the same characteristics as the current student who dropped out or failed to graduate from high school in four years. A student with a DEWS score of 79 has the same characteristics as students in prior years who graduated on time at a 79% rate. **A higher DEWS score indicates a better chance of on-time graduation.** The cutpoints are based on the accuracy of classifying students using historical data.[4]

Because the DEWS score is a prediction, there is a band of error around each student's score. This error band can be interpreted much like a margin of error in polling, representing the plausible range of risk for a student. Depending on the individual student, the range of this margin of error can vary. It is also important to note that the DEWS score calculation is based on data from the prior school year.[5] For these reasons it is critical that school leaders use the DEWS score in conjunction with current local data when making intervention decisions.

In addition to the DEWS score, each student DEWS report shows an individual student's data along four malleable domains — attendance, discipline, mobility, and WKCE —and rates the student's risk level as "Low," "Moderate," and, "High" in each domain.

[3] The DEWS score is not the same as the definition of "Children At Risk" under sec. Wis. Stat. 118.153.
[4] Students in the "high" risk category account for roughly 60% of all eventual dropouts or late graduates, and roughly one in two students in this category, as a whole, were correctly classified.
[5] Data comes from the annual ISES and WSAS collections.

Table 1: DEWS Risk Levels for Domains

Domain	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
Attendance	21+ days absent in prior year	13 to 20 days absent in prior year	Less than 13 days absent in prior year
Discipline	3+ days suspended/expelled in prior year	0.5 to 3 days suspended/expelled in prior year	0 days suspended/expelled in prior year
Mobility	2+ moves in prior year (school or district)	1 move in prior year (school or district)	0 moves in prior year
Assessments	Combined reading and math score within 1 standard deviation of High Overall Risk students[6]	Combined reading and math score within 1 standard deviation of Moderate Overall Risk students	Combined reading and math score within 1 standard deviation of Low Overall Risk students

Table 2: Combined Reading and Mathematics Score Thresholds for DEWS

Assessed Grade	DEWS Grade	High Risk	Moderate Risk	Low Risk
6	7	< 956	956 – 999	> 999
7	8	< 998	998–1035	> 1035
8	9	< 1016	1016–1053	> 1054

Why Don't Some Students Have Scores?

To receive a DEWS score a student must meet a few conditions. First, they must have been enrolled in a Wisconsin public school in the previous school year. Second, they must have taken the WKCE examination and received a score. Third, they must currently be enrolled in a Wisconsin public school for the data to be displayed.

Several types of students may not receive scores. Students who participate in the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD) alternate assessment will not receive a score. Students who did not complete the WKCE or were not tested will not receive a score. Students who have no enrollment or attendance data for the previous school year also will not receive a score. Students who have no DEWS score also need to be considered as a special case and be reviewed. Not having data in the prior year or participating in the alternate assessment are both indicators that a student's record should be reviewed for current data on warning signs such as attendance, discipline, and academic performance.

DEWS Release Schedule

The DEWS reports in WISEdash are updated twice annually. The first release — a preliminary release—is made available at the beginning of each school year so it can be used during school planning processes. The preliminary DEWS score is based on prior year assessment scores and estimated prior year

[6] See Table 2 for details on the scale score ranges for this release of DEWS. Future releases of DEWS may have a slight change in these ranges.

attendance, discipline, and mobility data.[7] When the Individual Student Enrollment System ISES Year End collection is finalized, sometime in the second quarter of the next year, the second DEWS release will occur based on the actual attendance, discipline, and mobility data from the prior school year. DPI analysis has shown that there is very little change in DEWS categories from the preliminary to the final data. Only the final DEWS score for each student each year will be retained.

Table 3: DEWS Release Schedule

Date	Release
Before School Starts	Preliminary DEWS Reports Available in WISEdash
February – April	Final DEWS Reports Available in WISEdash

The Review Process

School staff should compare students in DEWS to their local risk assessments of those students. All students identified by DPI as high or moderate risk should be reviewed. Any students identified by local staff as at risk, but identified by DPI as low risk, should also be reviewed. Figure 11 shows the ideal DEWS workflow.

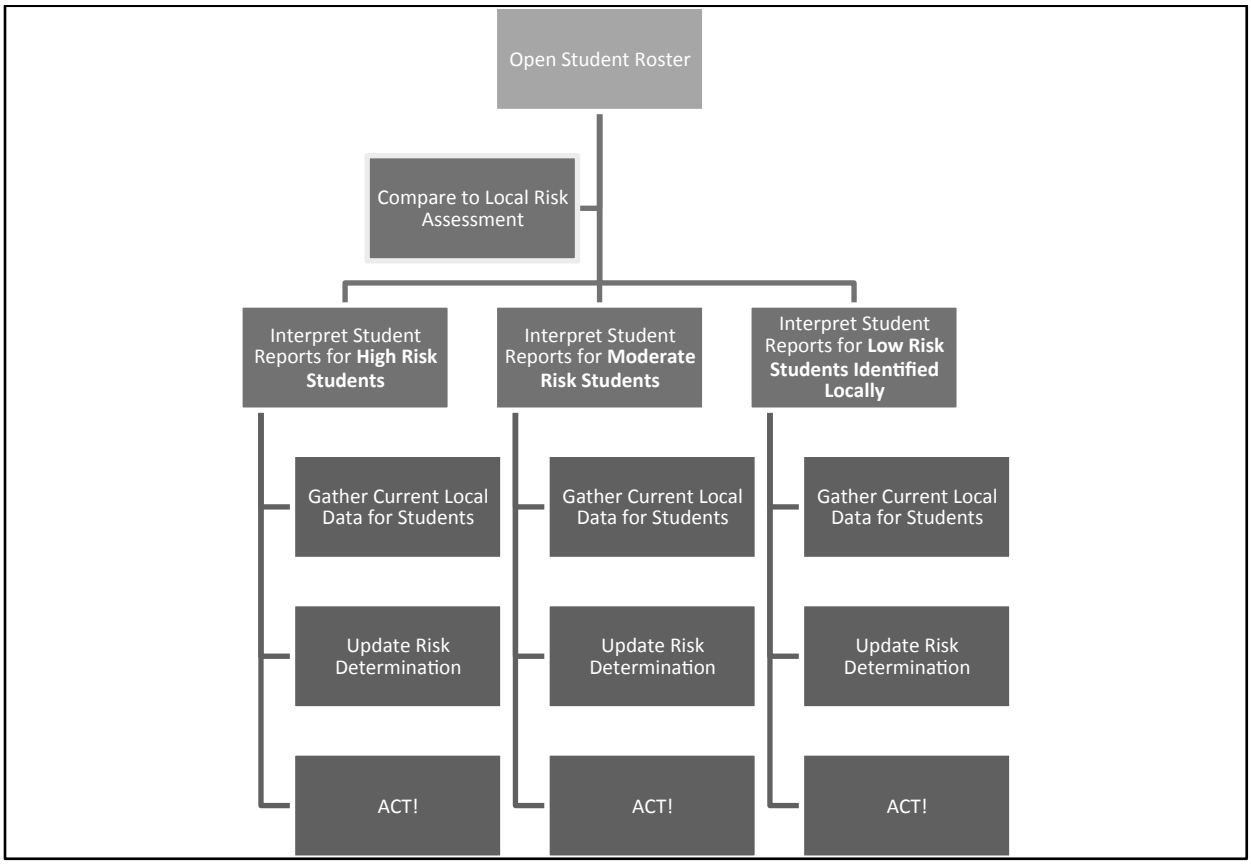


Figure 11: DEWS Workflow

[7] This means that in the preliminary DEWS reports students who were not present in Wisconsin public schools two years ago do not receive a score.

It is important to consider the information on each individual student available on the Student Detail page in WISEdash. This page provides school leaders with a snapshot of the information used to arrive at the DEWS score, the complete history of the student across all prior public Wisconsin K-12 institutions, as well as the overall score for each student. Figure 12 has a screenshot of the main tab on the Student Detail page.

Access the Student Report

Student reports can be identified in two ways. The first is by pulling up a student roster shown in Figure 12. Clicking on the icon next to each student's name will open a new window with the Student Detail page shown in Figure 13. From here, all of the data on the individual student is accessible including the DEWS report data.

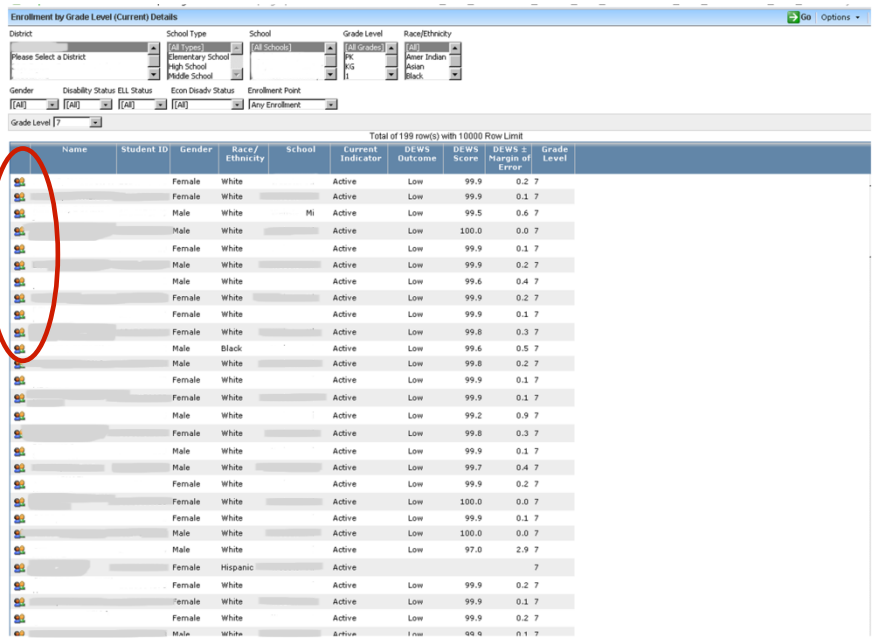


Figure 12: Student Roster to Access Student Detail

Additionally, users can navigate to the Student Search dashboard and search for individual students by name. Click the icon next to the student's name to access their Student Detail page.

Components of the Student Detail

Immediately beneath the student demographic information is a box showing Early Warning Outcomes (1). In this box there are 6 important elements. The first is the DEWS Outcome which lists both the student's risk group and in parentheses, the DEWS score itself. This box is shaded just like the student roster.

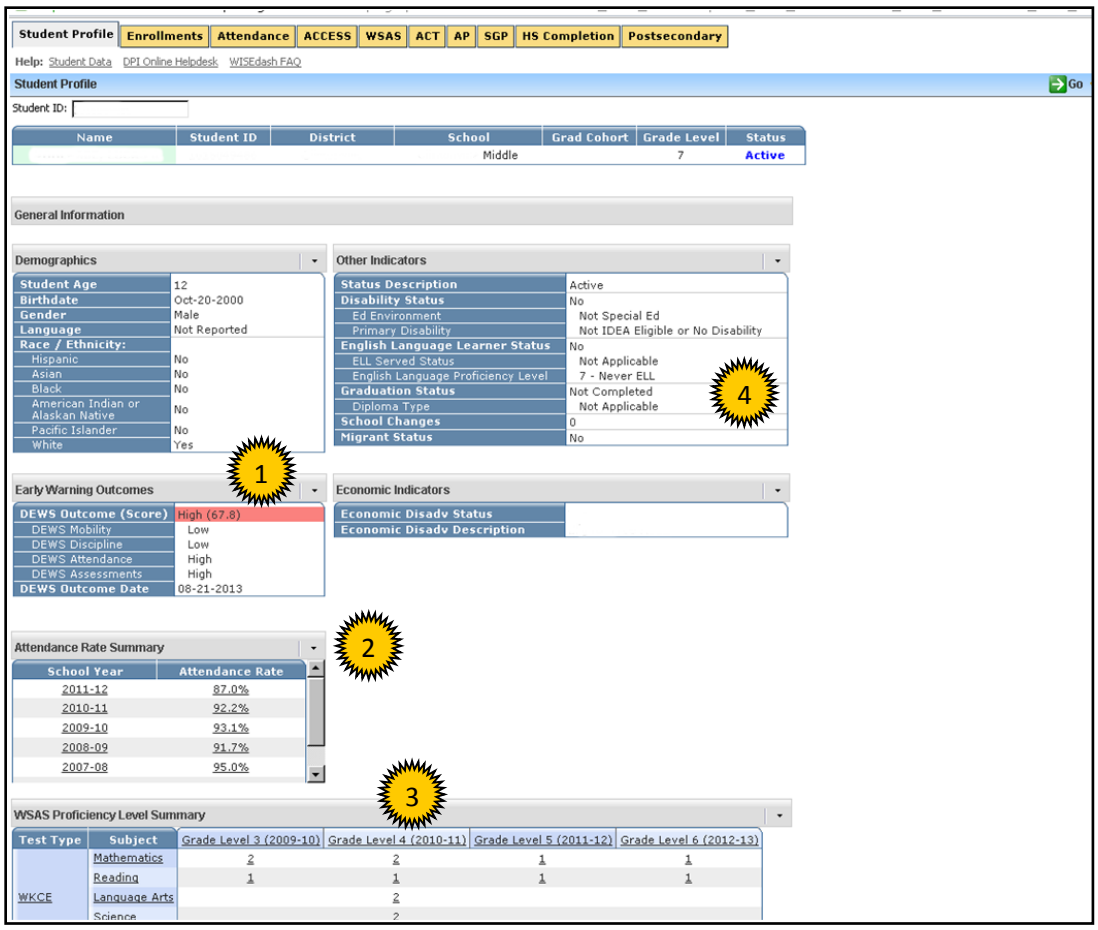


Figure 13: Student Profile

The report then displays the four key domains of DEWS with levels of low, moderate or high and the original data used to make that determination. Finally, the DEWS Outcome Date, or the date the last DEWS score on the student was calculated, are provided.

In Figure 13 the student has a high overall risk. Discipline and mobility indicators show a low level of risk, but the student has a high level of risk on the WKCE and a high level of risk on attendance. This specific risk can be immediately confirmed by looking further down the page and identifying the history of attendance and assessment for the student in the Attendance Rate Summary (2) and the WSAS Proficiency Level Summary (3) boxes.

For planning and informational purposes, the English Language Learning (ELL) and disability (SwD) status of the student are also included (4). A key point to consider when reviewing this report is that for some students with disabilities, having a low overall DEWS score may not be as much of a concern as a five- or six-year graduation may be a desirable and planned outcome as part of the IEP. However, the potential for dropping out of school is elevated for students with disabilities, and their risk of not completing school should be examined independent of a later planned graduation.

The low-, moderate-, and high-risk thresholds shown for the four domains are described in Table 1. These are not the thresholds used in the calculation of the DEWS score itself, but were set after the DEWS score was calculated to provide information on how indicators in these domains align with the DEWS score.[8] These thresholds were designed to differentiate between on-time graduates and late graduates and dropouts. They are meant to provide a quick snapshot of the areas of difficulty a student may be facing and allow for comparisons relative to students with a high chance of graduating on time. Figure 14 provides a closer look at the moderate- and high-risk student Early Warning Outcomes boxes.

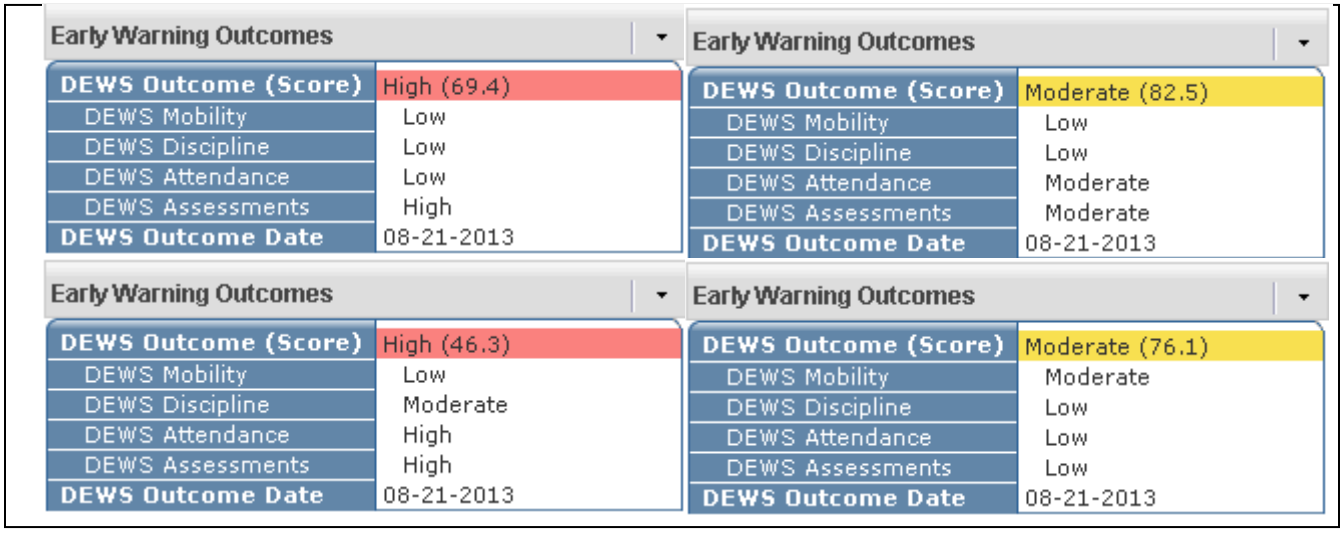


Figure 14: Early Warning Outcomes Examples

A key advantage of the WISEdash platform is the ability of the user to drill into further information about the student from within the report. For students who have a risk due to mobility the Enrollments tab shown in Figure 15 will be particularly interesting. To access the tab, the user just needs to click on the word “Enrollments” at the top of the Student Detail page. In this figure the user can see the entire enrollment history in Wisconsin public schools for the current student, including reasons for withdrawing and transferring to a new school and the name of the previous school and district.

[8] For details on the Dews score calculationand how the domains relate to the DEWS score, please see the DPI White Paper on the DEWS System (forthcoming, not available during fall release).

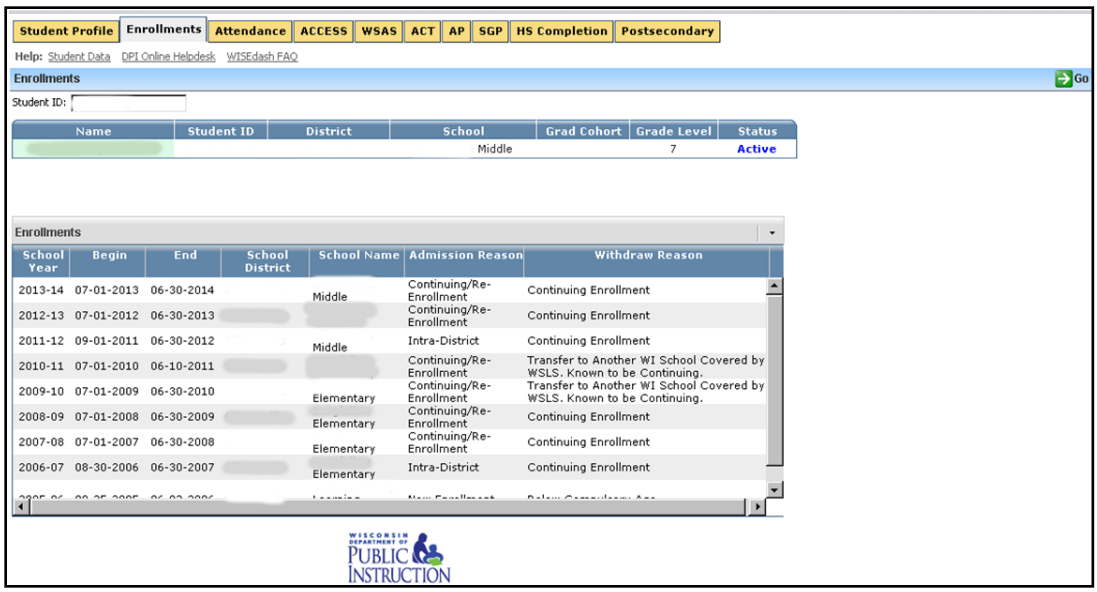


Figure 15: Student Enrollment History

Figure 16 shows the Attendance tab of the Student Detail page. Here the current student's complete Wisconsin public school attendance history is available. This information allows the user to evaluate whether the attendance issue is persistent, new, or has already been fixed.

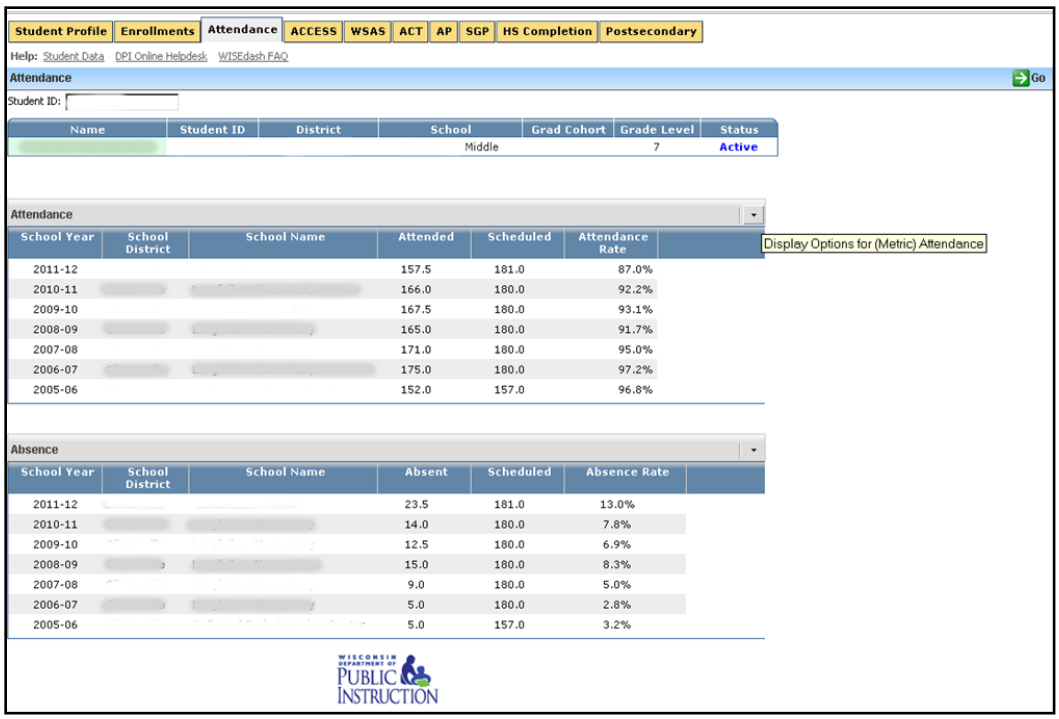
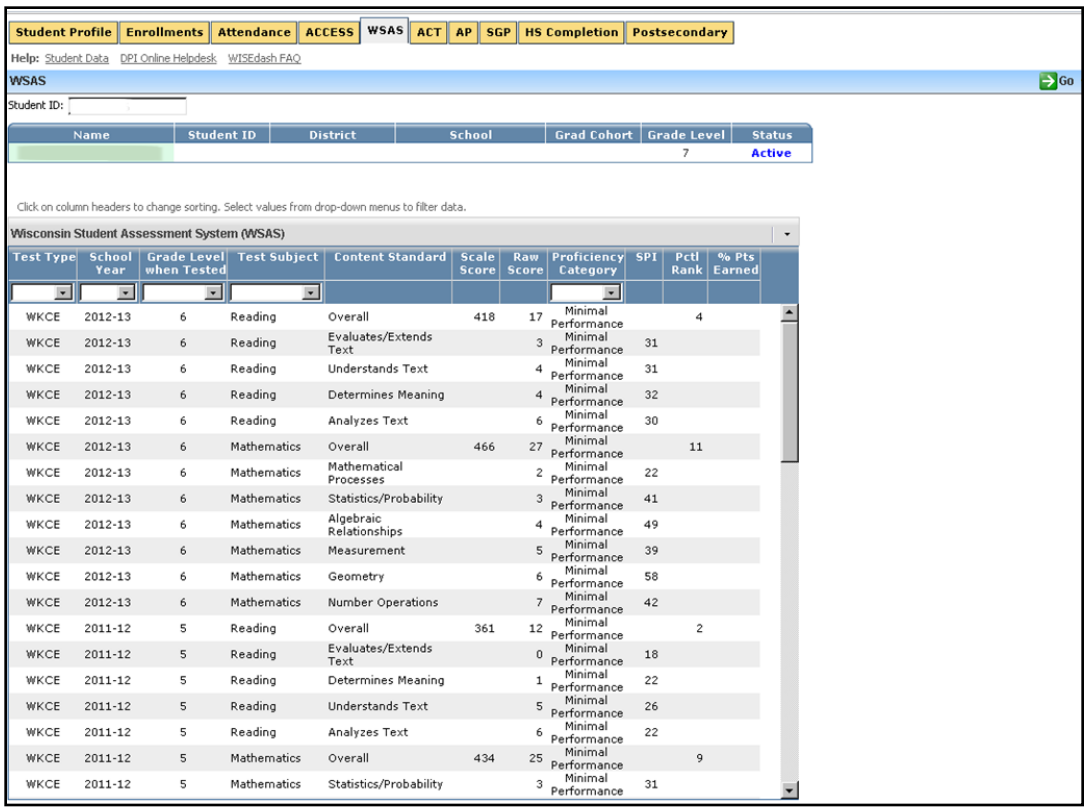


Figure 16: Student Attendance History

Figure 17 shows the WSAS dashboard with the student's WSAS assessment record. This dashboard includes all assessment history for the student, including prior school records if the student has recently transferred. The WSAS data also includes data on the subscale scores for the student as well as the overall score in each of the WSAS subject areas.



Test Type	School Year	Grade Level when Tested	Test Subject	Content Standard	Scale Score	Raw Score	Proficiency Category	SPI	Pctl Rank	% Pts Earned
WKCE	2012-13	6	Reading	Overall	418	17	Minimal Performance		4	
WKCE	2012-13	6	Reading	Evaluates/Extends Text		3	Minimal Performance	31		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Reading	Understands Text		4	Minimal Performance	31		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Reading	Determines Meaning		4	Minimal Performance	32		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Reading	Analyzes Text		6	Minimal Performance	30		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Mathematics	Overall	466	27	Minimal Performance		11	
WKCE	2012-13	6	Mathematics	Mathematical Processes		2	Minimal Performance	22		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Mathematics	Statistics/Probability		3	Minimal Performance	41		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Mathematics	Algebraic Relationships		4	Minimal Performance	49		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Mathematics	Measurement		5	Minimal Performance	39		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Mathematics	Geometry		6	Minimal Performance	58		
WKCE	2012-13	6	Mathematics	Number Operations		7	Minimal Performance	42		
WKCE	2011-12	5	Reading	Overall	361	12	Minimal Performance		2	
WKCE	2011-12	5	Reading	Evaluates/Extends Text		0	Minimal Performance	18		
WKCE	2011-12	5	Reading	Determines Meaning		1	Minimal Performance	22		
WKCE	2011-12	5	Reading	Understands Text		5	Minimal Performance	26		
WKCE	2011-12	5	Reading	Analyzes Text		6	Minimal Performance	22		
WKCE	2011-12	5	Mathematics	Overall	434	25	Minimal Performance		9	
WKCE	2011-12	5	Mathematics	Statistics/Probability		3	Minimal Performance	31		

Figure 17: Student Assessment History

Key Concepts:

- The Student Detail page provides the DEWS indicators as well as a wealth of historical and contextual information about the student's engagement and performance in school.
- Student Detail pages can be accessed directly from the any student roster or via the student search dashboard.
- Information from the Student Detail page can be exported or printed for review with others.
- The information provided on the Student Detail page and in the Early Warning Outcomes is a first step to identifying the appropriate action with a particular student.
- Students who have no DEWS score also need to be considered and have their local data reviewed.

Where to Get Help:

- http://helpdesk.dpi.wi.gov/ (DPI HelpDesk)
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wisedash-district-faq (WISEdash FAQ)

Review Current Local Data on Newly Identified Students

The DEWS score and the information in the student DEWS report are provided as a first step to help school staff focus their efforts on a targeted group of students. However, the information in these reports is not sufficient to make a final risk determination or to provide guidance on what steps should be taken. DPI recommends that school staff begin this process, by gathering local data for high and moderate risk students not previously identified by school staff as needing additional interventions or supports and combine it with the information in the DEWS report to inform decision making and next steps.

DPI also recommends a careful review of individual records for students whose do not have a DEWS score due to missing data, but who has an elevated risk status in one or more of the domains: attendance, discipline, mobility, or assessment. This review, combined with current local data, may help school staff determine whether these students also may need additional interventions or supports.

The DEWS score relies on ISES and WSAS data reported annually by schools to DPI. The data used in DEWS is from the prior school year, is limited, and sometimes contains errors. The DEWS score may reflect an error, a one-time anomaly in the student's record, or a problem that has been resolved. Using the additional information in each of the domains on the student report will help provide a more thorough understanding of next steps to take.

Gather Local Data

For each student with a high or moderate overall DEWS risk rating who was not previously identified locally as at risk, review current, local and more complete data to determine if the student is currently at risk. DPI suggests gathering as many of the data elements in Table 4 as possible for these students.

Table 4: Local Data for Updating DEWS Scores

Domain	Data Element	Indicators from current year
Attendance	Excused absences	Consider < 4 days in last 9 weeks as low risk
	Unexcused absences	Consider < 2 days in last 9 weeks as low risk
	Tardies	Consider < 5 as low risk
Discipline	Suspensions	Consider 0 as low risk.
	Expulsions	Consider 0 as low risk.
	Office referrals	Consider 0 as low risk.
Mobility	School moves	Consider 0 as low risk
	District moves	Consider 0 as low risk
WKCE / Assessments / Academics	Grades	Consider 0 failures as low risk
	Benchmark assessments	Consider low risk to be percentile rank above the 65th

Table 4 provides guidelines about what levels of current data might be associated with a student having a low risk. This information is presented to help school leaders in making their best professional assessment of the student's risk level.

Combine Local and DEWS Report Data

Table 5 gives an example of how to incorporate local data with the data provided in the student DEWS report. Users can develop a similar worksheet or add columns to the student roster to the current student's risk assessment using local knowledge and context. In this example, the student has improved on some indicators and not on others. Specifically, the student has fewer absences than in the DPI data and has a higher percentile rank on the most recent benchmark assessment than the percentile rank on the WKCE. However, the student also has changed schools recently and has a suspension. This review suggests that local data cannot rule out that the student has some risk of becoming a dropout or having a late graduation. Perhaps more information from staff who know the student is necessary to determine what additional steps might need to be taken.

In cases like this example, the other considerations identified will play a crucial role in assisting school staff to determine what actions might be most appropriate for this student.

Table 5: Using DEWS and Local Data Together

Student Name: Jane Doe					
Indicator Area	**Data from DPI**	**Risk Level (DPI)**	**Current Data**	**Improved?**	**Other Considerations**
Attendance	5.6 days absent	Low	3 excused absences 0 unexcused absences 1 tardy	Yes	Number, reasons (e.g. health issues and nursing records), patterns
Discipline	0 days discipline	Low	1 suspension day 0 expulsion days 5 office referrals	No	Number, reasons, behavioral issues.
Mobility	0 district moves	Low	0 district moves 1 school move 2 class schedule changes	No	Number, transition challenges
WKCE / Assessments / Academics	445 Read 512 Math	Moderate	Benchmark Percentile: 65th Grades: 0 course failures	Yes	Number of course failures or D's, reasons
OVERALL	77.2 $\pm$ 5.2	Moderate			Updated determination

Using this data, school leaders should update the information provided by the DEWS to improve the accuracy of the prediction and to identify important next steps. For each student with moderate or high risk, review the current data to determine if there exists a continued risk in the four domains.

Ask Critical Questions

Once local and DEWS Report Data have been combined and compared for the students in a school, the next step is to ask critical questions about each student to learn what supports or interventions might be best. Schools should gather a team, including pupil services staff, teachers, and a principal, to ask critical questions about each student, such as:

Attendance

- Is this student's attendance problem due to excused or unexcused absences or both?
- What are the reasons for the absences? What are root causes (e.g. unresolved health issues)?
- Is the student's attendance following a pattern? Are they missing only part of a day?
- Are there also a lot of tardies? Before which classes? Any patterns?

Discipline

- What types of behaviors is the student exhibiting that is resulting in suspensions, expulsions, or office referrals?
- What other school discipline referrals has the student had other than suspensions and expulsions (i.e., office disciplinary referrals, in-school detentions)?
- Are there risk-taking behaviors (e.g. use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs; early onset of sexual activity)?
- What patterns exist in unacceptable behavior (e.g. location, time of day, staff present)?
- What are the underlying issues? Have they been resolved?

Mobility

- How has the transition of this student into our school and our community been handled?
- What connections need to be made to the student and their family?
- What are the social or personal impacts of the student's relocation?
- Does this student qualify as homeless under federal law?

WKCE and Assessments

- Is the student performing higher on one subject than another?
- In what subjects is the student excelling; in what subjects are there struggles?
- Are the struggles the result of failing to complete work on time, or the result of poor performance?
- Has student been evaluated related to disability and if so do the results help interpret the score?
- Is there missing data for WKCE due to a disability but high risk in the other domains?

Behavior, Status, and Context

- Is the student maintaining good grades or are there struggles in some courses? How is the student doing in core courses?
- Has the student been retained? Is the student likely to be retained this year?
- Has the student been bullied? Is the student bullying others?
- Is the child currently living in foster care? Has the child previously been placed in foster care?
- Has the student had involvement with law enforcement, including having been adjudicated delinquent?
- Does the student have a history of trauma? Are there any known mental health challenges?

- Does the student participate in extracurricular activities? Does the student excel in organized activities outside of the classroom?
- Are there extraordinary family circumstances or a family history of being at risk (e.g. a history of school failure by siblings or parents)?

Decide if additional learning supports or services are needed

For each student with a high or moderate DEWS score not already identified by the school as at risk, add a summary of the current data described in the Ask Critical Questions section. Then determine if the underlying issues in the four domains contributing to risk are still present, or if they have been resolved. For students without a DEWS score, determine whether their domain score indicates the student may be at risk. For each student without a DEWS score who may be at risk and not already identified by the school as at risk, add a summary of the current local. Then determine if the underlying issues in the domains contributing to risk are still present, or whether they have been resolved.

If the issues leading to risk are still present, determine what types of additional learning supports will be provided to help reduce risk and re-engage the student in learning.

Consult DPI's *Student Records and Confidentiality* for more information regarding the storing and disposal of the records created during this process. http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/files/sspw/pdf/srconfid.pdf

For a description of some supports and strategies, see appendix A

.

Getting Help and Submitting Feedback

DPI manages technical support and user feedback through the DPI Help Desk application. To access the DPI Help Desk first visit: http://helpdesk.dpi.wi.gov/user.html. Figure 18 shows the DPI Help Desk landing page. From here, users need to open a "New Request".

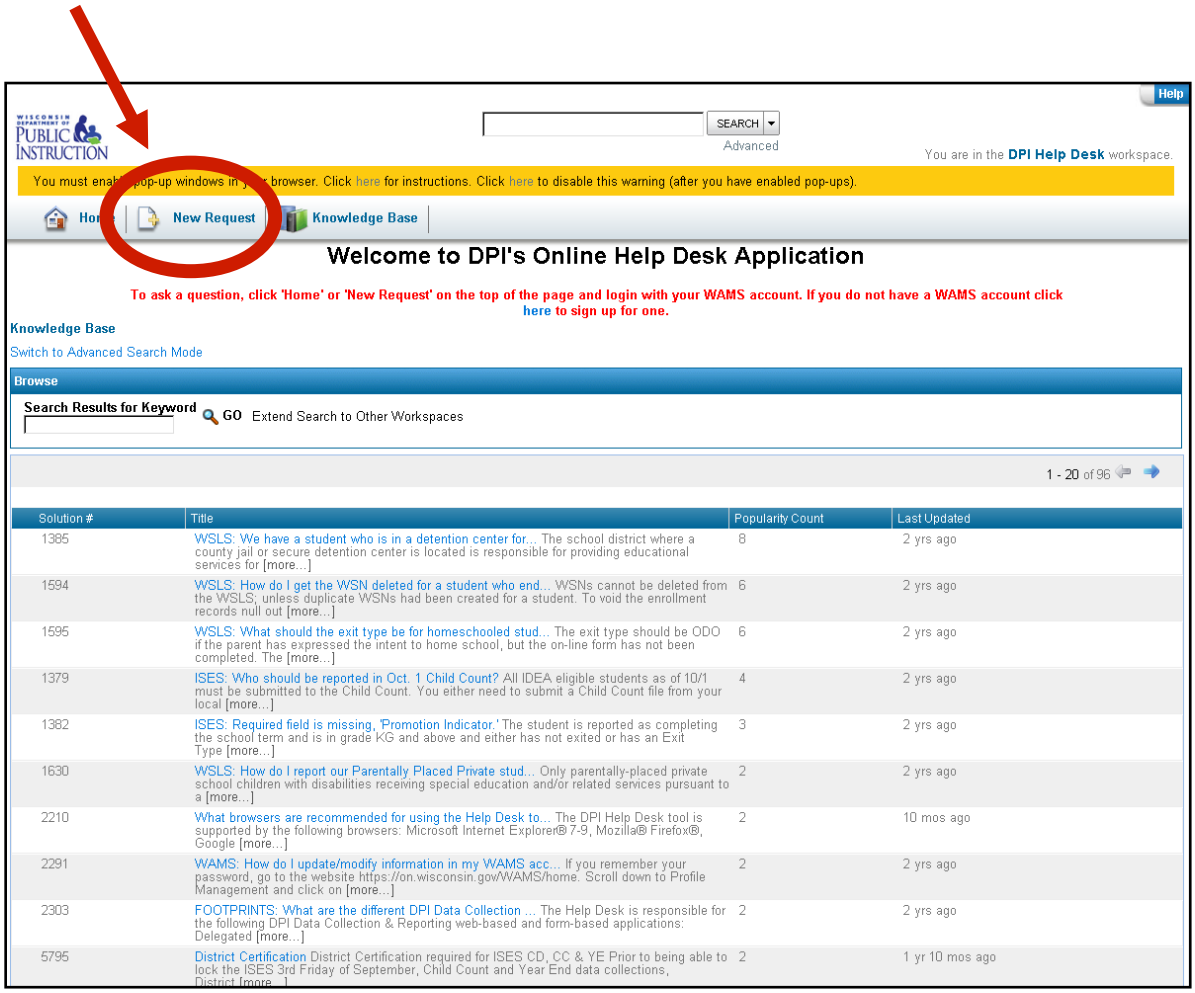


Figure 18: DPI Help Desk Landing Page

From here users will be asked to login with their WAMS ID. See Figure 19.

Figure 19: Help Desk Login

After logging in, users will see the request screen shown in Figure 20. Note that all required fields in the form are in red.

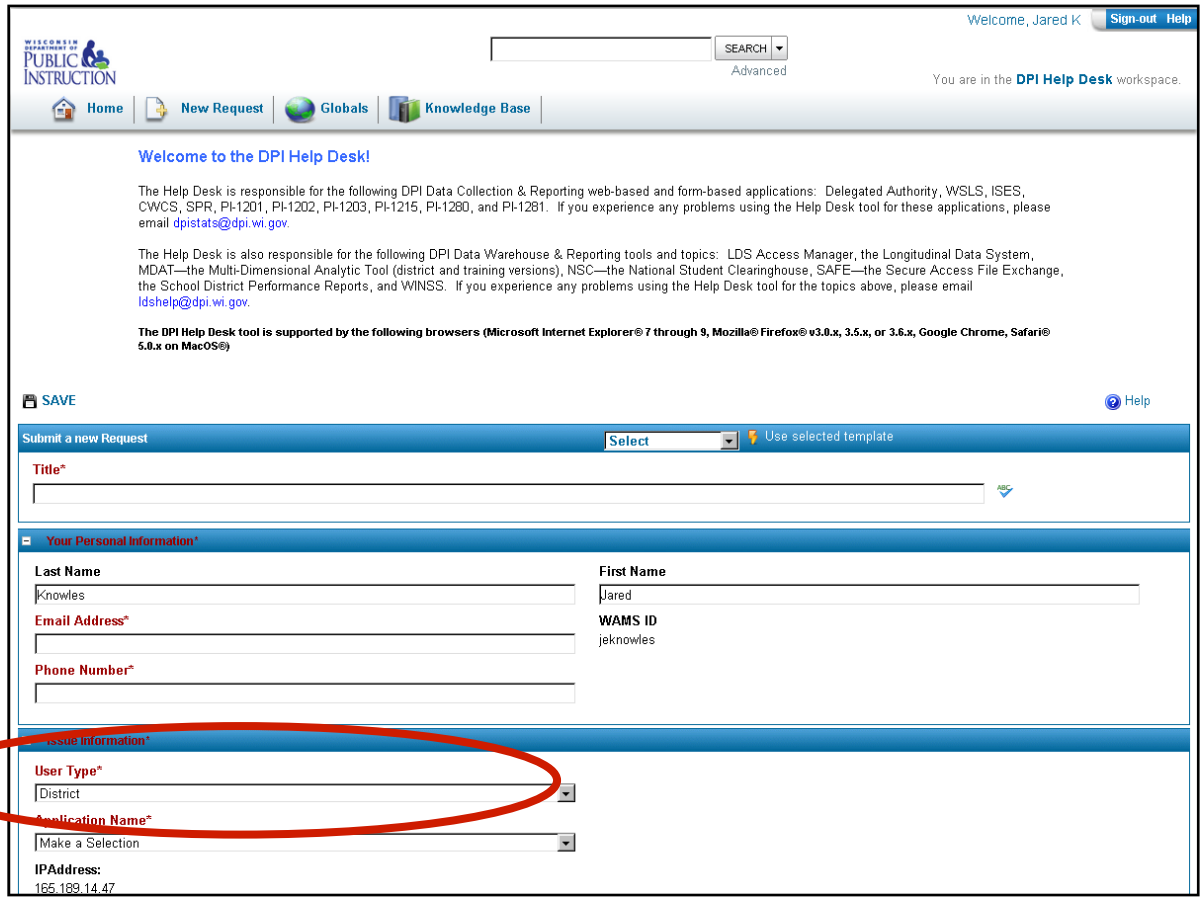


Figure 20: Help Desk Requests

Provide the request, suggestion, or feedback in the Title box. It is important you select "Dropout Early Warning System DEWS" under Application Name. There are three options for DEWS: "Access," "Comments and Suggestions," and, "General Information."

Required Form Fields

1. Enter a “Title” for your request/suggestion/feedback.
2. Review the contact information populated in the form based on your WAMS id and update if needed.
3. Review the “User Type” field and update if needed.
4. Select “Dropout Early Warning System DEWS” under “Application Name”.
5. Select the appropriate category for the request in the “Details” dropdown: “Access”, “Comments and Suggestions”, and “General Information”.
6. Enter your message in the “Description” field to describe your request.

Optional Form Fields

1. Click on “Attach Files” to attach any Word, Excel or .PDF files to support your request.
2. Enter an email address under “Additional Email Notifications” if you want someone else to receive a copy of this request.

One option is shown in Figure 21.

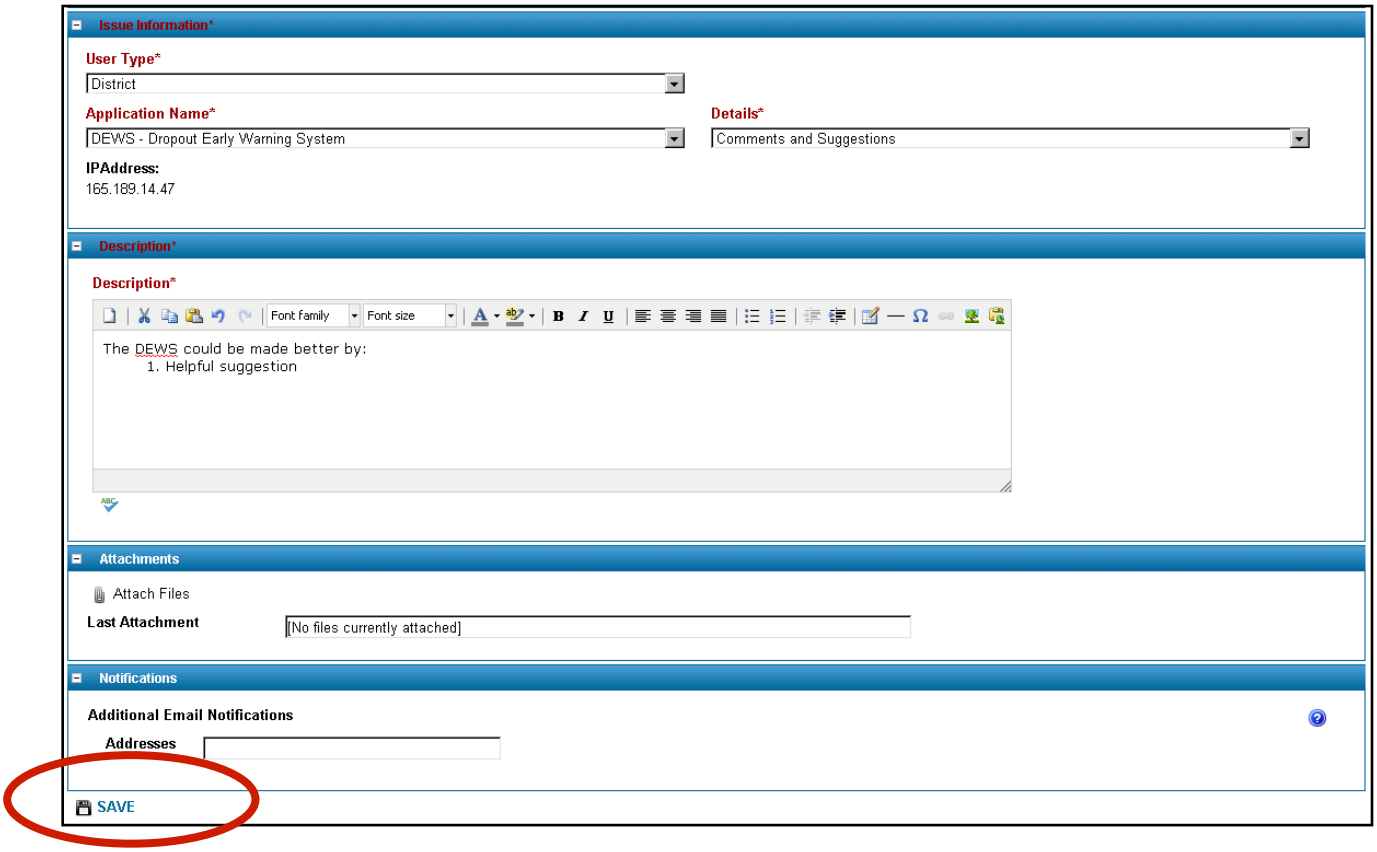


Figure 21: Submit Feedback

To submit feedback, complete the form and provide as much detail as possible. Then click “Save.” For more information on the DPI Help Desk visit:

http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/files/wise/footprints-information.pdf

Technical Support for WISEdash Access and Usage

For problems accessing WISEdash or viewing DEWS reports, submit a ticket to the DPI Help Desk: http://helpdesk.dpi.wi.gov/user.html

First, select "New Request." Then select "Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS)" and then Select "Access."

Feedback

We welcome any feedback you can provide to help us improve the experience of using DEWS. Comments or suggestions for improvements to WISEdash will be directed to DPI staff. DEWS is designed to help district and school staff, and feedback will help us continually improve DEWS and the reports provided on DEWS within WISEdash.

Visit the DPI Help Desk, select "Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS)" and "Comments and Suggestions." Then provide feedback, and DPI staff will be notified.

Questions

General questions on DEWS may be answered on the DEWS About the Data page at http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_dashdews. If there isn't a satisfactory answer, submit a request for more General Information. Visit the DPI Help Desk, select "Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS)" and "General Information." Type the question in the Description box, click "Save,", and DPI staff will be contacted.

Appendix A: Dropout Prevention Strategies on a Limited Budget

For most students who eventually drop out, leaving school before graduation is not an event but a gradual process of disengagement from school. The student may not feel safe or successful in the school and may disengage. Students may also have personal issues that lead to disengagement.

The primary strategies to help students re-engage vary, and school staff should attempt to better identify and address underlying causes, which may include personal and environmental or systemic factors. Personal factors may include—but are not limited to—physical and mental health problems, substance abuse, fear associated with bullying, academic deficiencies, and a lack of vision for career, further education, or training. Environmental or systemic factors can include various family issues, lack of culturally responsive school environments and practices, curriculum and instruction that does not match student interests and learning needs, over-reliance on exclusionary discipline, attendance policies that unintentionally encourage non-attendance, and similar issues.

For individual students identified through local data as at risk for dropping out or having a late graduation, consider the following promising practices.

- Build strong relationships between the student and at least one staff person. Ask students which staff they are comfortable with and would like to talk to or work with more frequently. Use the results to strengthen relationships, which provide a foundation for many other strategies.
- Assess the student's interests and encourage extracurricular activities aligned with those interests. If a high quality after-school club or program exists, actively recruit the student to participate.
- Support career exploration activities. Help the student assess their career interests and develop an Academic and Career Plan (also known as Individual Learning Plan) based on them. Help the student see the value of education as a pathway to a good life after high school, including a career.
- Assess the student's resiliency skills and provide resources to help them build skills that are lacking.
- Use PBIS Tier 2 interventions such as Check-In/Check-Out.
- Assess the underlying causes for any attendance problems, and assign a school social worker or other student services staff member to work with the student and family Strengthen family engagement strategies, including personal outreach to the family of student at risk.

- Alter the student's education plan to provide more experiential learning or an alternative educational placement that better matches their learning needs.
- Assign a mentor, either community or school-based. Careful screening and preparation of mentors is essential.
- Use a restorative justice approach for discipline problems.
- Provide tutoring in areas of academic deficiency or other targeted academic interventions within a Response to Intervention (RtI) framework.

If the school has a significant number of students identified through local data as at risk for dropping out or late graduation, it may be especially important to also consider environmental or systemic contributing factors. Strategies to consider in addition to the above include, but are not limited to, the following.

Attendance

- Check the school's attendance policy and practices to assure that there are no unintended consequences contributing to absences, such as tardies being counted as half-day absences.
- Be sure that attendance practices are in place to closely monitor attendance and intervene in problems early, even before habitual truancy occurs. Involve the school nurse to assure that chronic health problems are properly managed.
- Monitor attendance closely and address any underlying conditions.

Behavior

- Implement Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) systematically schoolwide to help prevent behavioral problems leading to disciplinary exclusion.
- Promote alternatives to out-of-school suspension, including a restorative justice approach.

Interpersonal Relationships

- Establish periods for students to meet with advisers if they do not yet exist, or use these periods for relationship building and career exploration and planning.
- Create safe spaces for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. Posting signs in the student services areas and providing information in the student handbook is a start.
- Establish and implement bullying prevention policies and practices that create a physically and emotionally safe school environment. Respond swiftly and effectively to any incidents of bullying.

Family Connections

- Strengthen family liaisons roles for student services personnel.
- Ensure school-age parent programs and advocates are available and responsive to student needs.
- Assess the school's culturally responsive practices and strengthen areas where gaps exist to connect better with both students and families.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Enhance curriculum and instruction to strengthen student engagement.
- Ensure responsive strategies are in place to meet varied learning styles and backgrounds.

Dropout Prevention Resources

National Dropout Prevention Center http://www.dropoutprevention.org/

US Department of Education What Works Clearinghouse http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/WWC/topic.aspx?sid=3

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction http://graduation.dpi.wi.gov/grad_resources

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction http://graduation.dpi.wi.gov/

Wisconsin PBIS Network http://www.wisconsinpbisnetwork.org/

Wisconsin RtI Center http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/

Appendix B: DEWS Calculation Details

The DEWS score is a calculation based on data known to be predictive of student on-time graduation in Wisconsin. After evaluating a large set of candidate statistical models for producing the most accurate prediction, the current DEWS model is a probit regression, a class of generalized linear regression models. The model uses historical data from Wisconsin public school students to predict their observed on-time graduation based on data from their 6th, 7th, and 8th grade years.

For each grade, a separate model is fit using the following data elements:

- Attendance rates and possible attendance days
- Out-of-school suspensions and expulsions
- Number of school moves in the previous school year
- Performance on the WKCE assessment
- Student school of attendance
- Student characteristics (ELL status, SwD status, race, gender)

The inclusion of this data allows the statistical model to make the best comparison possible between students in the current year and similar students in previous years. The end result is that the model can predict between 60 percent and 65 percent of future dropouts and late graduates. This model predicts with a false positive rate (students identified who do not dropout) below 60 percent.

DPI is working continually to increase the accuracy of the system, which should improve as subsequent years of student data become available. Additionally, a technical white paper will be published soon that explains the details of the calculation and how the model selection process was conducted.